Industrial Distribution

June 1985

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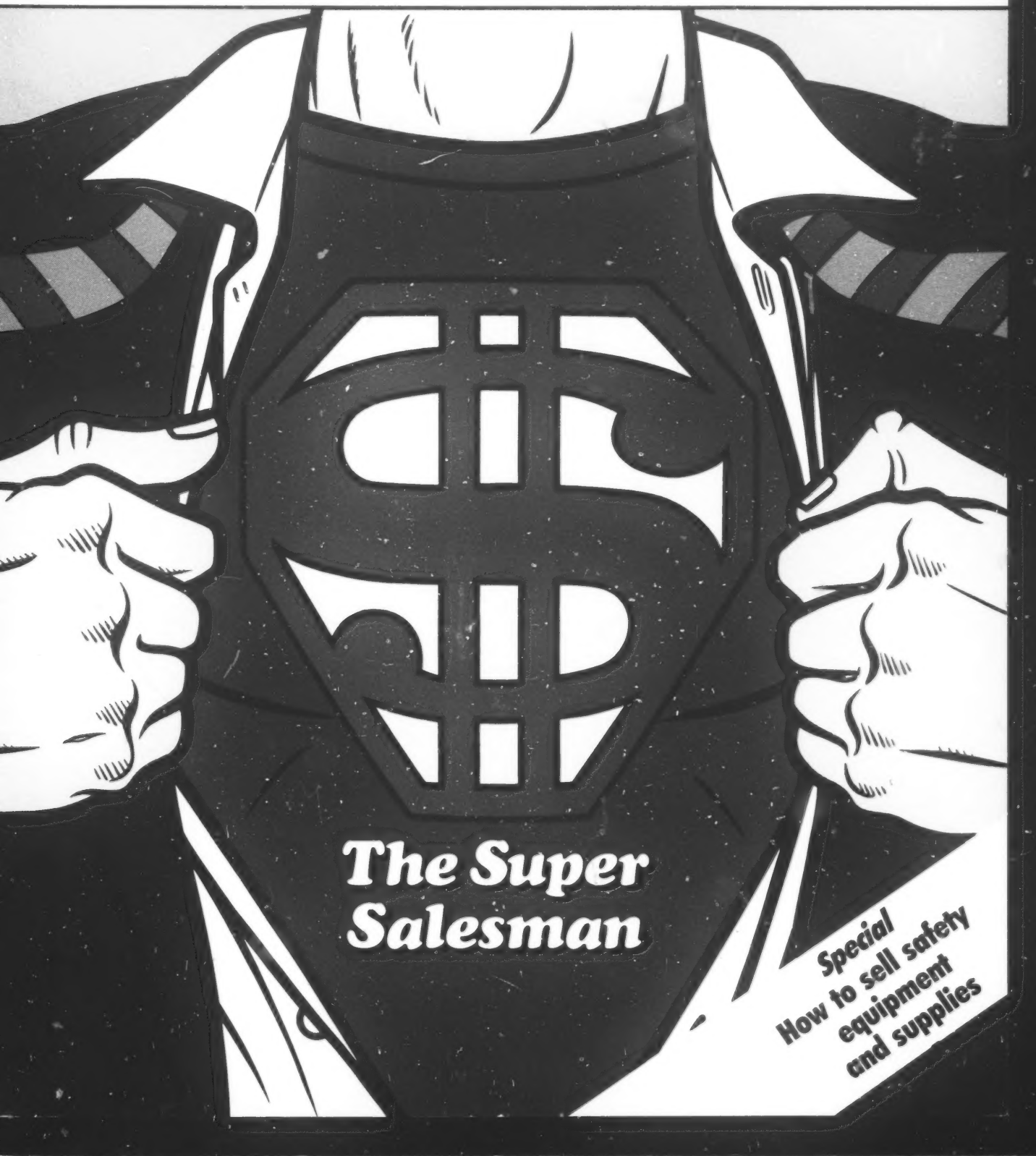
Hotline:
Fluctuating dollar impacting on industrial distributors



The Super Salesman

Special
How to sell safety equipment and supplies

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ID Industrial Distribution

VOL. 74 NO. 6/74th yr. A TECHNICAL PUBLISHING PUBLICATION JUNE 1985

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resources but also fit in with longer-range goals.

These included: development of better information systems to monitor and control present operations including inventory control, quality control and materials planning and handling; realign the plant function in more logical patterns; reduce job set-up time; work toward a total manufacturing system to replace the mix of new and old or computer and manually controlled equipment.

The participants also agreed that a total manufacturing system approach is ideal but that few companies are in a financial position to redesign and build a system from the ground up. Instead, they agreed, plants must work with a mix of old and new equipment.

Among the steps suggested by the Council for correcting the deficiencies of front-line managers are:

- The inclusion of manufacturing in degree courses.
- The establishment of cooperative programs that allow students to work in plants while still in school.
- Managerial rather than technical training for supervisors.
- Experience in other areas of a company by supervisors before their assignment to the shop floor.

Participants in Norton's first Council included:

Richard B. Kennedy, vice president, Vitrified Grinding Wheel Div, Norton Co.; Peter J. Ashton, vice president, Bearing Operations, Timken Co., Canton, OH; Sam F. Karabasz, vice president-manufacturing services, Eaton Corp., Cleveland, OH; Richard P. Shore, industrial relations advisor, U.S. Bureau of Labor-Management Relations & Cooperative Programs; and Howard Tinsman, director of manufacturing, Energy Services Group-Cooper Industries, Springfield, OH. □

Peter Baldwin heads new Ingersoll-Rand products division

CHARLOTTE, NC—Peter Baldwin has been named to head Ingersoll-Rand's newly formed Single Stage Products Div.

Baldwin, vice president and division general manager, said the new division's initial product offering will be X-FLO, a mixed-flow single stage turbo compressor.

Baldwin

According to Baldwin the new division will allow Ingersoll-Rand to fill out its product line and to introduce innovative products. □

Automation aids and position sensors seen showing strong growth

NEW YORK—Products as diverse as automobiles and packaged foods are fueling the market for position sensors and automation aids, says a new study by the research firm of Frost & Sullivan.

According to the report, the 1984 market level for these products has already doubled and should grow another 50% between 1984 and 1987 to become valued at more than $400 million.

Much of the credit for the growth belongs to the automotive industry, says Frost & Sullivan, which uses the sensors in both assembly line tasks and as on-board engine controls in completed cars. Other uses in packaging, materials handling and in computer printers is also on the upswing, claims the study.

The report says the 1984 industrial market for position sensors totalled $242 million plus another $25 million installed in automotive applications. Sensors are expected to grow to $363 million in industrial applications and $38 in automotive uses by 1990, notes the study.

In terms of specific types of hardware, the Frost & Sullivan report notes that in dollars, rotary encoders are the clear leaders with photoelectric position switches the second largest segment and proximity devices the third.

The Frost & Sullivan study *Position Sensors and Automation*, tidy, priced at $1550, is available from Frost & Sullivan; 106 Fulton Street; New York, NY 10038. □

[continued on page 12]

Indicators . . .

Marginal decreases in all three major indices indicate that the economy may be ready for a breathing spell after the strenuous exertions of recent months. The NIDA/SIDA *Industrial Distribution Index* showed a 4.9 point drop nationally with all regions experiencing about the same degree of decline in March. The East with a 5.5 point drop showed the sharpest loss followed closely by the Midwest which registered a 5.4 loss and the West which slipped 5.1 points. The South fell by 3.2 . . . SIDA's *Monthly Sales Trend Report* for February showed a minimal loss of 2.30 on a national basis although the regional results were decidedly mixed. Despite the overall drop, for example, SIDA Area 3 comprising AL, KY, MS and TN increased by a healthy 18.79 points. Losses range from SIDA Area 4 (AR, LA, OK, TX) which fell by 9.49 points from the January figure to SIDA Area 2 (FL, GA, SC, Puerto Rico) which were down by 5.92. SIDA Area 1 (NC, VA, WV) stayed essentially flat posting a miniscule gain of 0.64 over January. Year-to-date '85 versus year-to-date '84 comparisons show a less than one point increase . . . ASMMA's *New Order Index* for February fell by just two points from January, for a loss of 1.7%. Although the latest figure is the lowest since April '84, it is higher than any figures registered during 1982 or 1983. The base line for ASMMA's Index is the year 1977 which represents 100 . . . The American Machine Tool Distributors Assn. (AMTDA) *Total Index* of orders dropped 6.8% in February from January to a figure of 590. One year ago the Index stood at 591, an infinitesimal .2% higher than the current figure . . . The National Welding Supply Assn. *Welding Supply Index* fell by exactly 10 points in February to 183.9 compared to 193.9 in January. YTD '85 to YTD '84 shows a 17.2% increase. Despite the latest decline, the current figure has only been exceeded twice in the last 50 months and is higher than any figure previous to October '84 . . .

REGIONAL REPORT

Sales slip again in March

For the second straight month (which makes four out of the past five months), sales gains declined, when measured year-to-year. March figures show a 3% gain over March '84, which is a 3% drop from February's gain of 6%.

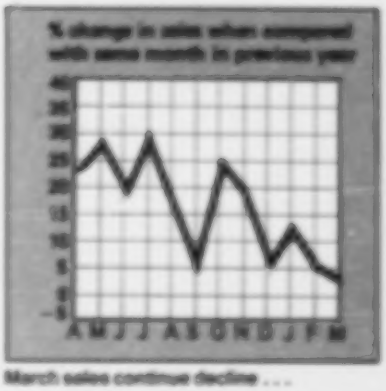
Although the overall regional statistics were influenced by West South Central's sharp 22% drop, all of the regions reporting gains were weak (in single digits). In area reporting in this category, only Upstate New York and Pennsylvania were in double digits, showing gains of 10% and 18% respectively. The Mountain region, registered pluses across the board for general line distributors.

In the more immediate, month-to-month category (March '85 vs. February '85), some improvement is indicated in the U.S. Total which stands at a gain of 8%. This figure was down 2% in February. In most regions and areas, the gains were slight. The exceptional regions were Middle Atlantic, up 13%, and South Atlantic, up 11%; exceptional areas were Pennsylvania, up 28%, and Oregon-Washington and Wisconsin, up 15% and 14% respectively.

In cumulative reporting, the first 3 months of '85 compared to the first 3 months of '84 continued to show a gain (approximately equal to February's). The Pacific region is the strongest, with Upstate New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio the strongest areas. West South Central is the weakest region, down 11%. □

RECEIVABLES*	March '85		vs. March '84	
	Gen.	Spec.	Gen.	Spec.
New England	41	50	37	48
Middle Atlantic	44	45	41	47
South Atlantic	38	36	34	37
East North Central	40	44	39	41
East South Central	41	—	40	—
West North Central	—	—	—	—
West South Central	—	42	—	37
Mountain	—	—	—	—
Pacific	38	37	40	44
National	40	42	39	43

*Average days outstanding



March sales continue decline . . .

SALES BY REGIONS (% change)	March '85 vs. Feb. '85			March '85 vs. March '84			1st three months '85 vs. 1st three months '84		
	Gen.	Spec.	Both	Gen.	Spec.	Both	Gen.	Spec.	Both
NEW ENGLAND: CT, RI, MA, NH, VT, ME	+12	+3	+6	+3	+6	+5	+6	+13	+10
Connecticut	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Massachusetts	+15	+5	+8	+4	+8	+7	+6	+12	+10
MIDDLE ATLANTIC: NY, NJ, PA	+15	+11	+13	+7	+6	+6	+16	+5	+9
New York Metropolitan Area	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Upstate New York	+8	−11	0	+27	−9	+10	+39	+2	+21
Pennsylvania	+26	+17	+21	+17	+15	+16	+19	+9	+13
SOUTH ATLANTIC: DE, DC, MD, FL, GA, NC	+11	+10	+11	0	0	0	+11	+7	+9
SC, VA, WV									
Georgia - Florida	+10	+4	+7	+7	−5	0	+15	+4	+9
EAST NORTH CENTRAL: OH, IN, IL, MI, WI	+4	+15	+9	+2	+11	+6	+6	+13	+9
Indiana	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wisconsin	+9	+16	+14	−8	+15	+9	−4	+12	+8
Chicago	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Michigan	+2	—	—	+7	—	—	+10	—	—
Ohio	+9	+12	+11	+4	+10	+7	+8	+16	+13
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL: AL, MS, KY, TN	+13	—	—	+16	—	—	+20	—	—
WEST NORTH CENTRAL: MN, ND, SD, IA, NE, KS, MO	+8	—	—	−21	—	—	−4	—	—
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL: AK, LA, OK, TX	−12	+11	+6	−3	−25	−22	+3	−13	−11
Texas	—	+12	—	—	−23	—	—	−11	—
MOUNTAIN: NM, AZ, CO, UT, NV, WY, MT, ID	+30	—	—	+17	—	—	+5	—	—
PACIFIC: CA, OR, WA	−4	+13	0	+13	−11	+6	+15	+21	+18
L.A.-San Diego	−6	—	—	+13	—	—	+14	—	—
Oregon-Washington	+11	+19	+15	+17	−16	−2	+18	−13	0
U.S. TOTALS	+4	+12	+8	+5	+1	+3	+10	+7	+9

The Super Salesman

Ask a salesperson who's just getting by what it takes to be a good salesperson and he'll probably give you some standard answers: a good personality, nice appearance and positive attitude. Ask someone who's doing a lot better and he'll probably add to the list and rearrange it: a certain amount of drive, a willingness to plan and the ability to put the customer first. But if you ask one of the very best, someone who makes the top dollars year after year, you'll find something else, something that is missing in the others—a drive to succeed that borders on obsessive.

While all salespeople think that appearance, personality, planning and customer service are important, the top ones do something that the others don't —they make the sacrifices necessary to be the very best. This may be seen in their work habits (making calls at 7 a.m., finishing up at 8 p.m.), willingness to learn (attending extra product seminars) or persistence (calling 9, 10 or however many times it takes to get an order). But regardless of how it manifests itself, the willingness to sacrifice is there, and it's what makes them the elite in industrial sales.

"When the buyer turns you down cold, you face the true test."* Secrets of Closing Sales, *Charles B. Roth and Roy Alexander (Prentice-Hall).

"I called on a bee very for two years. Two years, and the guy would never see me! He was always out, too busy or would tell me to make another appointment or something. Then, when I finally got to see him the first time, he gave me an order. Why'd I keep on doing it? Because I knew that someday something would happen and he'd want to talk."
Art Schuh, industrial salesperson for 16 years.

Persistence is a key with any of the top sellers. When a prospect or customer says no, they don't walk away. Instead, they view the rejection as a challenge.

"We recently made a large sale to a big abrasive user in Florida that was about 2½ hours away from us," explains Bruce Davis, of Davis & Marr Supply Co., Jacksonville, FL, a salesperson for four years. "The day I walked into the place, I was told that there's no way I'd get the business. But we got it. We showed them what we could do for them and we got it."

Davis, who says that "the selling starts when the customer says no," feels that the only way to be successful is for a salesperson to have the tenacity to keep on calling when he knows that he can help a customer. Those who don't, he says, just don't want the business as badly as he does.

Rejection doesn't stop Jim Littlefield either. An 18-year sales veteran working for Davis Industrial Products Co., Portland, OR, Littlefield says, "If a customer tells me don't come back, your product isn't as good as so-and-so's and I know that I can help that customer, rejection doesn't bother me a bit. It makes me go stronger and work harder at convincing him that he's wrong."

Schuh of Scallan Supply Co., Cincinnati, OH, says that that's what selling is all about. "It's more of a challenge to call on a person when he doesn't want to do business with you."

Persistence, however, does not mean unrestrained aggressiveness, a quality that is found frequently in less successful salespeople. Top sellers are persistent and aggressive, but in a selective and diplomatic manner. They don't bully their way into seeing someone, demand business or insist on being heard. They find out how they can help, what products are best for a customer and new ways to present their case.

For top performers, persistence means doing homework and keeping up on the latest business trends. When they do go back to make a call, they usually have new information along with a modified presentation that will more closely fit the customer's needs. Less successful salespeople often ignore this, and, when calling on a customer again, give the same pitch that got them nowhere the first time.

Dr. Richard E. Boyatzis, a Harvard-trained psychologist and president of McBer and Co., a Boston, MA, management consulting firm that has conducted hundreds of tests on successful salespeople, says that such flexibility and creativity are found in most of the elite salespeople.

"They always have alternative strategies and are willing to switch; they are always willing to try a new approach. And, if it's necessary to be innovative on the spot, they will be," he says.

Top sellers have an excellent sense of what is going on during a sales call and what has happened when it's over, which helps them to shape their next move. Dr. Boyatzis calls this quality "conceptual thinking and analytical thinking.

"These salespeople have the ability to draw inferences, to use concepts to deduce what's going on in the selling and what to do next. Doesn't everybody do this? No. Some people don't pay any attention and go through their presentations regardless of what they are encountering."

Tony Cantone, vice president, sales, The Hope Co., Fitchburg, MA, and a former salesperson, calls it "street sense.

"Top people know when they are being

fooled, when a guy is saying, 'Yeah, that sounds good to me,' but really means, 'You're not getting the order!' "

Lesser salespeople may push at this point, thinking that they are being persistent, or they may give up altogether. The best usually change their approach or retreat to find a better way to make their pitch.

"They make money the old fashioned way. They earn it." John Houseman for Smith Barney.

"I'll put in 60 hours in an average week. Hours don't mean anything; getting customers their products does." Ruben Nayback, industrial salesperson for 30 years.

Supersalespeople may not do anything radically different from others, but they do it more often. The "it" might be planning calls, seeing clients or anything that could make them more successful. They don't see selling as a nine-to-five job.

"If it were only a 40-hour-a-week job, I don't think I could make much money," says Schuh. "I spend a lot of time working at home, calling clients and so on because it's a lot easier to talk to them then."

Littlefield, of Davis Industrial Products, believes that this is a key to his success. "I work harder and smarter and spend an awful lot of time planning," he says.

They are not clock watchers or goof-offs—if it were that easy, everybody would be successful. Instead, they make calls early—as early as 7 a.m. if they know the purchasing agent will be there—because they know that they will have the customer's time to themselves. And they'll see people late in the afternoon, regardless of how tempting it might be to knock off early.

"That's the one thing you really see in these guys—the work ethic," says Cantone. "They're willing to do the homework, the prospecting, the identifying of accounts."

Dr. Boyatzis says simply that the best people have an "underlying desire to do better." They want to be top sellers and are willing to do what it takes for them to reach that goal. If that means working longer hours to learn about a new product or how to outmaneuver a competitor—which it often does—they'll do it. Their work ethic is also evident in their devotion to customers. While all salespeople are likely to say that the customer comes first, the best really act that way.

"One account we had was about $30,000 a month, but I knew that they were using a product wrong—they were buying too much of it and I told them so. But the place was very secretive and they wouldn't let me back in the plant. Finally, after six months, they let me back and I showed them how to use the product right and cut their usage over $20,000 a month," says Littlefield. His action, he says, has made him that much stronger in the plant.

Dr. Boyatzis says that supersalespeople do want to help customers. "The best are really good at finding out what the other person wants or needs or values and then figuring out how to meet those needs. In some cases that might mean not selling the higher priced item."

The best try to become part of their customers' companies. They are sought out by customers when there are problems, when answers are needed and for general advice. They know their customers' businesses and view themselves somewhat as consultants. They like to hear how their hard work and dedication to the customer saved someone time or money. And they make themselves available.

"Money changes everything." Cyndi Lauper.

"Why am I in sales? Put it this way: I need a new BMW." Bruce Davis, industrial salesperson for four years.

As a motivator, money tops the list for many of the best salespeople. "Being hungry is always a great self-motivator," says Ruben Nayback, of F.B. Wright, Dearborn, MI, a 30-year sales veteran.

Arthur Thorton, vice president, sales, Davis & Marr Supply Co., goes a step further: "It's not aggressiveness or single-mindedness that drives these guys; it's the greed factor. Money is their motivator."

Money, as Thorton says, is the reason why people get up in the morning and go to work. And obviously, the more a salesperson sells, the more he will make. But the "greed factor" does not mean that all best sellers are out to make money for its own sake (although some certainly do).

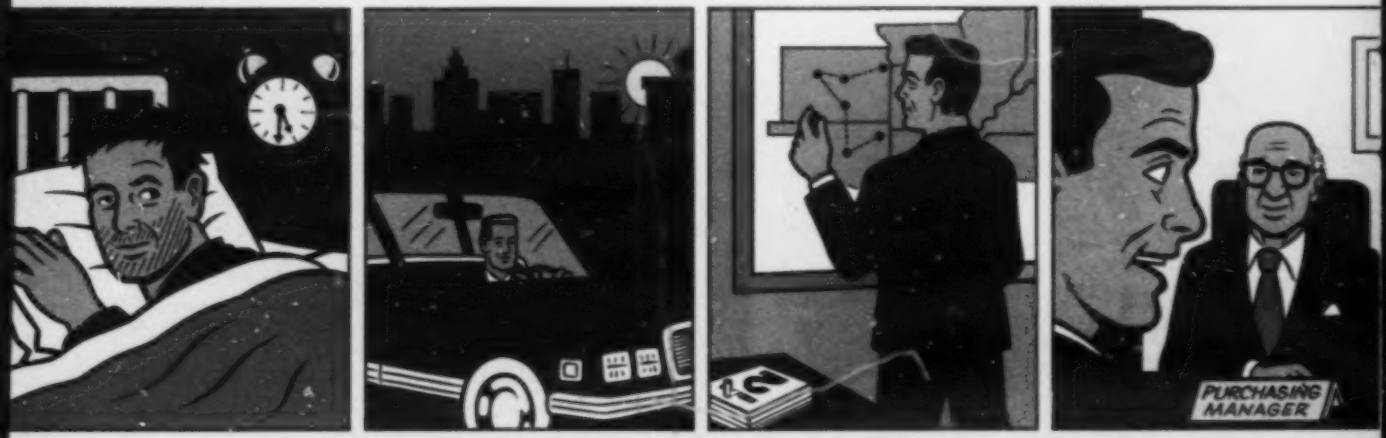
For example, Littlefield explains "greed" in a different way: "I'm very much a family man and I try to give my family as good a life as I can. Making more money helps me to do that."

However, according to many salespeople and sales managers, the chase for dollars slows in time, which helps to explain why many of the younger salespeople seem more materialistic.

"What they really want is a reward," says D.S. Beck, vice president, marketing and sales, Winograd's Steel & Supply, Greely, CO. "The younger ones want money. After that, a salesperson needs a pat on the back."

Recognition and respect are important to these salespeople but not necessarily from their peers or even manage-

By Bill Kelley
Senior editor



ment. After all, many feel that if they are outstanding salespeople, management knows how good they are. Where they do value respect is from the customers, and this too seems to motivate them.

"Customers call on me for help on all kinds of problems," says Nayback. "After a while they come to respect you. They even call on me for ideas, and that's quite a plus."

Littlefield agrees: "Knowing that I've done a good job and getting recognition from the customer are great motivators."

Their need to succeed is usually a basic part of their personality. Whether they are low-key sellers or old-fashioned backslappers, they want to be number one. They are competitive (mostly with themselves) and possibly even a little anxious, qualities that draw many of them to any activity where they can be challenged. Says Dr. Boyatzis, "Many of these people like to participate in sports in which they have a very individualized measure of what they are doing, sports like golf or bowling."

Salesman Davis says simply: "I want it more than the next guy. The way I look at it is, who came in second in the Daytona 500? Who knows and who cares!"

Their competitiveness, however, is usually qualified. Davis, for example, says, "I couldn't care less how anyone else is doing."

As a group, top sellers are not spiteful toward salespeople in their own firm, adds Dr. Boyatzis. They want to be on top as a result of their success, not someone else's failure.

Despite their desire for money and recognition, most top sellers questioned don't like sales contests. They find the rewards inconsequential and the contests irritating.

"I'm not really interested in sales contests," says Davis. "It's bir[illegible]ved. What do you get? A television? If you're successful, chances are you've already got more than one. Besides, you're in a sales contest every month or whenever they tally up what you sold."

"I don't like them," says Nayback. "I don't want to go out and sell one product when we have 150. Contests get in the way."

Bob Hueneke, a salesman with Hawley Industrial Suppliers, Bridgeport, CT (see box), says that he doesn't like the premise of the contests. "My job is to sell. If there's a contest for selling 100 grinding wheels, why aren't I out there selling those grinding wheels to the customer who had the potential in the beginning? You shouldn't be paid extra to go out and sell because that's your job to begin with."

"You gotta believe." Tug McGraw.

"You have to feel that if you get to see someone, you're going to sell him." Art Schuh.

At the very least, top salespeople have healthy egos. They have to, says Bruce Smith, vice president, sales, Northern Industrial Supply, Inc., Saginaw, MI. "In what other job are people constantly telling you that they don't love you?"

All salespeople hear "no" more often than "yes." The best know how to keep on going. Their confidence in themselves tells them to try again, learn more or figure out a new way.

"Sure you have to have a big ego," admits Schuh. "You've got to have the confidence in yourself." Dr. Boyatzis agrees, saying that confidence is evident in the top sellers in all fields.

Ego also lets salespeople make cold calls, shrug off and learn from rejection and go "on stage" call after call regardless of their chances for success.

Not surprisingly, sales managers also agree that the top salespeople have big egos. "They are on an ego trip," says Al Binder, sales manager, Scallan Supply Co., Cincinnati, OH. "I know. I was one and I was on an ego trip!"

"The great ones have big egos," says John D. McGill, Jr., of Standard Equipment Co., Inc., Mobile, AL, who has been in industrial sales since World War II. "They're great and they know it."

Beck, of Winograd's Steel & Supply, explains why he thinks that a top person has such a strong belief in himself. "He's an egomaniac with an inferiority complex. He's out to prove something. And each and every day he has to prove it

Compensation for superstars

These compensation figures for top salespeople are from a random sampling of distributors in 10 U.S. metropolitan areas. The top figures are impressive enough to lead us to conclude that the rewards for astute, dedicated people in sales are open ended. Several of the distributors polled by *ID* said that they could not give us figures for their top salespeople for fear of causing problems with others on their sales staffs, the reason, we feel, for the $25,000 and $30,000 low-end figures in the table.

Atlanta	**Los Angeles/**
$150,000	**San Francisco**
$100,000	$52,000
$70,000	$35,000
	$30,000
Boston	
$75,000	**New Orleans**
$50,000	$60,000
$45,000	$50,000
Chicago	**New York**
$150,000	**metropolitan area**
$75,000	$65,000
$45,000	$45,000
	$40,000
Denver	
$50,000	**St. Louis**
$30,000	$60,000
	$50,000
Jacksonville	$25,000
$50,000	
	Seattle/Portland
Research:	$60,000
Linda E. Mutnick	$40,000

Bob Hueneke

because after the month is over and the sales are in, he has to prove it again."

Some sales managers say that the top sellers are difficult to manage because of their egos. They have to be coddled, understood and given constant reassurance. Says one sales manager, "God, it's like having children!"

Cantone agrees, saying that top sellers tend to be egotistical, selfish and totally concerned with their own success. "They're only open-minded when they think something you can do or say will help make them rich or famous," he says.

They don't always listen well and are not good with details either, some managers say. "They test the system," says Smith. "If call reports are supposed to be in on Monday, they'll hand them in on Friday. If they're supposed to be last name first, they'll be first name first."

While Dr. Boyatzis disagrees that all top salespeople are bad with details, he does say that they will probably only do the work that they believe does them any good.

"What they will not do is a lot of paperwork that they feel doesn't help them achieve their goals," he says.

Some sales managers also feel that top salespeople don't know or care enough about the business end of distribution, that they are out selling and sometimes ignore the company's business procedures.

However, that doesn't change one thing: Sales managers feel that their top people are more than worth the trouble. They not only expect ego problems, but many say that they'd be wary if there weren't any.

"Hell, yeah, they're worth it!" says McGill. "You show me a bunch of salespeople who aren't any trouble to manage, and I'll show you a bunch of salespeople who aren't worth a nickel a sackful." □

A day in the life of a sales star

Bob Hueneke might typify a supersalesperson if, indeed, there were such a thing as a typical sales star in industrial distribution. He looks the part, dressed in a conservative three-piece suit, flashy tie, rings on each hand and, of course, a good shine on his shoes. His grey hair is in place, but not too perfect, giving him the overall appearance of someone who's just vain enough to want to look nice. About average in height and perhaps a little too heavy, he calls himself an "older salesman."

Hueneke has been in industrial sales for 26 years with Hawley Industrial Supply, Inc., Bridgeport, CT. He makes "good bucks," he says, and drives a plush 1984 Buick Regal, courtesy of the company, with all the extras: stereo, tape deck, air conditioning —the works.

He's up early most days, but not because he jogs or works out. He likes to leave his house about 5:20 a.m. to see some accounts because he knows that if he arrives early, he'll see the purchasing manager before he gets too busy with his own work. And it also gives him time to make more calls.

"I've been a million dollar salesman for a number of years for Hawley—the top one," he says. "And I'm not trying to sound vain when I say that. But if you work hard, it's there for you, the money is there."

For Hueneke working hard means more than getting up early. He feels that the key to his success is having the customers' interests at heart and working hard for them. "I'm part of their families. I make myself part of their families. If the purchasing agent thinks that you're working for him, will do anything for him, and you watch out for good prices and the like, then you're going to make out."

Like many experienced salespeople, Hueneke has some strong opinions on selling. He hates, he says, to see someone sell price. "You don't need a salesman to sell price. You want to sell price, put an ad in the newspaper; don't use a salesman."

And he doesn't like the long-lunch approach. "A lot of salespeople try to go out to lunch with customers as often as they can because they'll get themselves a free meal. I don't need that; I can afford the three or four dollars to go to lunch. Besides, it keeps me out of embarrassing entanglements lots of times and doesn't look like I'm trying to buy the business."

We spent a day in the field with Hueneke and found his approach to selling smooth and uncomplicated. He is aggressive, but only to a point. He is a low-keyed operator —a good listener with an interest in what buyers have to say. He probes without being pushy and approaches each customer as a friend.

Once he joked with a buyer before he got involved in a technical discussion on a grinding wheel problem. He offered to have an answer that afternoon and the customer was satisfied.

On the next call he took inventory of the shop. So confident and trustful was the customer that he let Hueneke fill out the order and he signed it. Honesty, Hueneke said later, pays off.

Although he is relatively free of gimmicks—and perhaps only a trunk full of briefcases and ever-present breath mints give an indication that he's in sales—there's still some old-time salesman in him.

"I was told when I first started selling not to change my Boston accent," he says. "Because if they can't remember my name, they'll at least remember Mr. Boston." He still has the accent.

"Don't get me wrong," he says, trying to explain his success. "Don't think for a minute that I don't want to play golf on the nice days.

"But a lot of guys want the big bucks and want them easy. They want to play golf two, three times a week in the summertime. Gee, I'd love to but, you know, you gotta go out there and work for it. You gotta go get it."

On one call he talked to a customer about business at the plant. Afterward the two shook hands and Hueneke got ready to leave. The customer said, "Can I do anything for you?"

"Yeah," he answered smiling, "send orders."

BK

How to sell safety equipment and supplies

High technology, stiffening Federal and local safety regulations, union pressures and zooming insurance costs are opening more sales opportunities for distributors of safety equipment.

Distributors handling fire and safety equipment, both as part of a general line and as a specialty, are finding that 1985 sales are continuing the brisk pace of 1984.

As a result of the continuing stimulus provided by OSHA, new areas of opportunity represented by the high technology sector, and the toxic wastes "Superfund," distributors are consolidating the sales gains they made in 1984 and are looking forward to solid gains in 1985.

The Safety Equipment Distributors Assn. (SEDA) says that business among its members nationally is averaging an 8-9% increase over 1984, although noting that of this increase, 4 or 5% is accounted for by inflation leaving a fairly modest 3-4% representing real growth.

High technology is affecting the safety equipment field in two ways. First, the new diversified base of high technology companies is providing a totally new market for safety equipment. And secondly, the increasingly widespread use of such high tech products as lasers, robotics, and computers by the conventional smokestack industries requires new approaches to protecting both personnel and equipment.

What they're saying

An informal survey of SEDA members elicited the following regarding product areas they consider the most promising for 1985:

- Our company is going to sell a lot of safety products for asbestos cleanups. The lines that will see the most action are coveralls and respirators . . .
- Because of the big asbestos scare, we will be busy supplying contractors with respirators and coveralls. Some workers will be using two coveralls a day and that's going to mean a lot of business for us.
- I don't think this is a regional thing. The whole country is going to be busy with asbestos cleanups for the next ten years probably.
- It has to be eye protection. We expect to see a tremendous amount of growth with this product in the next few years.
- Respiratory products will definitely be a big growth area for us. That industrial commission ruling on asbestos removal gave many safety equipment distributors a shot in the arm. . .
- If the removal and re-construction contracts on asbestos remain at this level, we'll be busy for a while. We'll be selling cartridges, disposable units and direct air respiratory supplies, for the most part. This respiratory safety issue will bring us much more business than eye protection or gloves. . .
- We see a big market in chemical waste management, nuclear industry and high technology with industrial clothing. . .
- We're forecasting our customers' need for special chemical protection ranging from disposable garments to encapsulated suits. . .
- In the high tech area we think we'll be providing a lot in the way of cleanroom clothing. For instance, I think we'll be selling to a great number of Class 100 cleanrooms. . .
- For the nuclear industry, we'll be selling the gamut of protection goods, especially disposable garments. . .

High tech

Distributors note that the growth of the new high tech companies should assure a more predictable flow of business than in the past.

"We won't sell the tremendous volume of safety equipment that we used to sell during our boom periods, but neither will we experience the substantial decreases in sales that characterize the bust periods. Our business will be steadier and thus easier to plan and inventory," says SEDA president Richard H. Rice, head of Rice Safety Equipment Co., Seattle.

"It was easy to get volume in 1981 because we had all of the blue-collar type industries but now many of them are gone," stresses Rice. "Even in the auto industry where we hear how good business is, they've laid off 300,000-400,000 workers that we used to service and they've never been re-hired."

SEDA points out that the nature of its business is changing subtly as a result of the new high tech requirements.

It contrasts the necessity of protecting workers from the environment—common in the heavy industries such as foundries and steel mills—with protecting the environment from the workers such as is necessary in the electronic industry "clean" rooms where a speck of lint or a human hair can damage a microcircuit or a computer chip under manufacture.

As a result lint-free, anti-static, disposable clothing, is a rapidly growing market.

According to Frank E. Wilcher, Jr., president of the Industrial Safety Assn., an organization comprising safety equipment manufacturers, much of the impetus for increased sales comes from the technical improvements and innovations in the equipment. He points out that although instrumentation to detect, measure and analyze atmosphere seems to be in the forefront of safety product technology, all equipment is being constantly improved.

As examples he cites metal hard hats that have been replaced by stronger, lighter plastics and polymers, and respirators and gas masks that provide protection against an increasingly wide spectrum of air-borne contaminants including radioactivity.

One major safety equipment distributor says zero-inventory or just-in-time is also helping to smooth out the distributor's business with increasing use made of systems buying by his customers which assures a continuing relationship.

One side effect of just-in-time buying is that customers tend to reduce the number of their vendors. One company went from 200 to just 14 vendors assuring the chosen few an inside track as long as deliveries were on time and service was acceptable.

How to sell . . .

Segmenting the market

According to figures provided by SEDA, the three top categories of safety equipment handled by its members in terms of dollar volume are wearing apparel including gloves, respiratory products, and eye protection.

The following is the complete breakdown by product category for the year 1984. Figures given are percentages of total sales.

Wearing apparel	19.1%
Respiratory products	18.5%
Eye protection	13.2%
Hearing protection	7.1%
First aid	6.1%
Head protection	5.6%
Foot protection	5.0%
Gas analysis instruments	4.6%
Safety belts/nets	3.1%
Miscellaneous: signals, ladders, eyewash, cans, etc.	17.8%

Product Knowledge the Key

All experts agree that there are just three keys to marketing safety equipment: *product knowledge, product knowledge* and *product knowledge.*

In the selling of safety supplies, the term value-added is given new meaning as the customer increasingly is forced to rely upon the expertise of the distributor in recommending the appropriate and legally required equipment for each application.

Under current product liability laws, failure by the distributor to specify the proper equipment or selling faulty equipment can make him a party to litigation in the event of injury or death resulting from its use. Although the proposed *Federal Uniform Product Liability Law* would exempt distributors from suits involving faulty or defective equipment, specifying the wrong safety devices can still place him in legal jeopardy.

On the positive side, the increasing sophistication and complexity of manufacturing processes and procedures—particularly among the high tech industries—and the growing awareness of the hazards of such substances as PCB's, asbestos and certain chemical wastes, has created a strong demand for distributors with the expertise to recommend, supply and service the appropriate equipment.

One distributor pointed out that as regulations become more stringent and distributors' knowledge of workplace hazards grow, occupational safety and health professionals are increasingly turning for advice to well-informed dealers who sell reputable products.

Merchandising

The suppliers of safety equipment assist the distributor in honing his product knowledge through techniques as diverse as the production of product familiarization videotapes, the publication of train-

How OSHA can help you sell

OSHA has prepared a *Handbook for Small Business* containing a business safety checklist that directly relates to the selling of fire and safety equipment.

You might want to reproduce the list below or obtain the publication (OSHA 2209) to distribute to your current and potential customers.

Among the questions asked by OSHA are the following:

- Are all exits marked with a readily visible sign that is properly illuminated?
- Are portable fire extinguishers provided in adequate number and type?
- Are fire extinguishers recharged regularly and properly noted on the inspection tag?
- Are NO SMOKING signs prominently posted in areas containing combustibles and flammables?
- Are covered metal waste cans used for oily and paint soaked waste?
- Are waste receptacles provided?
- Are approved safety cans or other acceptable containers used for handling and dispensing flammable liquids?
- Are your first aid supplies adequate for the type of potential injuries in your workplace?
- Are there quick water flush facilities available where employees are exposed to corrosive materials?
- Are hard hats provided and worn where any danger of falling objects exists?
- Are protective goggles or glasses provided and worn where there is any danger of flying particles or splashing of corrosive materials?
- Are protective gloves, aprons, shields or other means provided for protection from sharp, hot or corrosive materials?
- Are approved respirators provided for regular or emergency use where needed?
- Is protection against the effects of occupational noise exposure provided?

What they're selling

Although inventory requirements of safety equipment dealers vary according to location, customer mix and type of competition, the following represents a typical cross-section of safety equipment carried by a specialist:

Head Protection
Protective caps
Cap liners
Stocking caps
Ear bands

Face Protection
Face shields — Welding helmets
Face windows

Eye Protection
Safety glasses
Safety goggles
Visitor spectacles
Emergency eye wash stations

Hearing Protection
Ear plugs
Ear muffs

Instruments
Gas detection
Oxygen detection
Location alarms

Respiratory protection
Self-contained breathing apparatus
Dust and mist respirators
Fume respirators

Hand protection
Welders gloves
Leather palm gloves
Rubberized gloves
Heat resistant gloves
Acid/corrosive resistant gloves
Clean room gloves

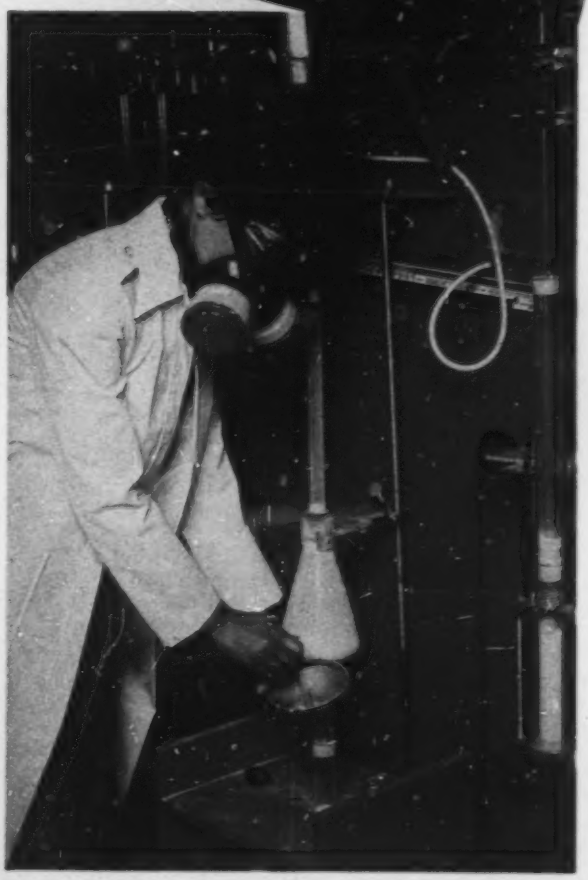
Protective Clothing
Aprons — Coveralls
Coats — Lab Coats
Chaps — Disposable garments
Hoods — Hairnets
Pants — Beard protectors
Weather Suits

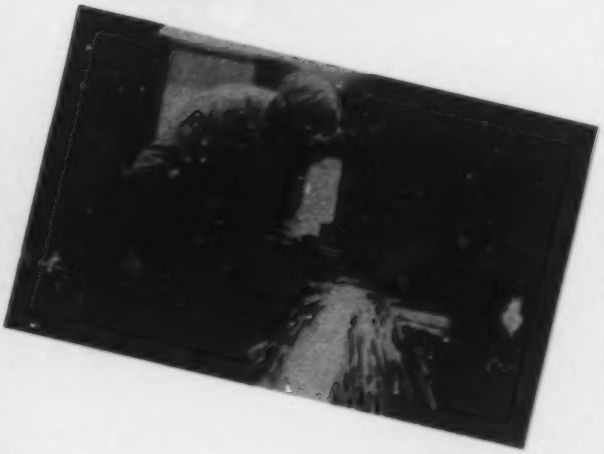
Foot Protection
Waterproof buckle boots
Waterproof over-the-shoe boots
Foot guards

First aid equipment

Rescue devices and fall protection
Stretchers — Safety belts
Rope grab safety devices
Escape ladders — Safety lines
Safety harnesses

Miscellaneous equipment
Traffic and safety mirrors
Emergency lighting systems
Emergency exit lights
Vehicle emergency lights
Vehicle back-up alarms
Safety cones
Safety cans
Waste cans
Storage cabinets
Nonsparking tools — Wheel chocks





Troubleshoot and sell—Keep an eye on pipe bends and joints . . . pressurized lines . . . flammables . . . acids/corrosives . . . storage . . . noise levels . . . poisons . . . moving machine elements . . . moving vehicles . . . air quality . . . welding/cutting/forming operations . . . floor quality . . . excessive temperatures . . . supports/suspensions

Look for: excessive wear . . . leaks . . . open arcs . . . overloads . . . bare wiring . . . flying chips/sparks . . . oily/cracked floors . . . unguarded moving parts . . . excessive noise . . . overheating . . . corrosion . . . polluted air . . . broken containers . . . open skin/eye irritants . . . carcinogens . . . poor mechanical joints . . . missing signs/guides/rails . . . dangerous overhead storage/loads

How to sell . . .

PROMOTIONAL AIDS FOR DISTRIBUTORS

	FULL-LINE CATALOGS	CATALOG INSERTS	UPDATED PRICE LISTS	DIRECT MAIL/STUFFERS	CO-OP ADVERTISING	AD MATS/REPRO PROOFS	NEWSLETTERS	SALES TRAINING	DISPLAY RACKS	SAMPLES	SIGNS/POSTERS	NOVELTIES/GIVEAWAYS	AUDIO-VISUAL	PRODUCT TRAINING	MARKET RESEARCH	TECHNICAL SUPPORT	TRADE SHOW EXHIBITS
Bata Shoe Co., Rt. 40, Belcamp, MD 21017	●	●	●	●	●			●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Best Mfg. Corp., Edison St., Menlo, GA 30731	●	●	●	●				●		●				●		●	●
Dual-Lite Inc., P.O. Box 468, Newtown, CT 06470	●	●	●	●	●			●	●	●	●	●		●		●	●
Eagle Mfg. Co., 24th & Charles Sts., Wellsburg, VA 26070	●	●	●	●		●	●	●		●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Jumac Products, 863 Easton Rd., Warrington, PA 18976	●		●			●	●	●		●				●		●	
Kappler Inc., P.O. Box 218, Guntersville, AL 35976	●	●	●	●				●		●	●			●	●	●	
Pioneer Industrial, 512 E. Tiffin St., Willard, OH 44890	●	●	●	●		●	●	●		●				●	●	●	●
SBS Co., P.O. Box 1387, Saginaw, MI 48605	●		●	●				●		●			●	●	●	●	
Stonehouse Signs, Inc., P.O. Box 546, Arvada, CO 80001	●	●	●														

ing manuals, slide/tape presentations, newsletters and bulletins.

For most manufacturers, however, the heart of their product information effort remains the low-tech catalog.

According to sales communications experts, catalogs can still be the distributor's most successful day-to-day salesman.

For one thing, they point out, even your best customers may not be familiar with your total product line. For another, catalogs encourage orders from customers who are wary of person-to-person sales presentations but will respond to a printed description.

And finally, they say that mailing a catalog is significantly more cost effective than sending out a salesperson to personally call on a customer.

According to distribution communications consultant, Martin Manaly, the timing of a catalog mailing can be critical. The months of July and December are relatively unproductive while February, March and September are the most productive.

Another key to the successful use of catalogs is to carefully research the mailing list. Experts recommend involving salespeople in a plan for identifying key contacts within a company. On the other hand, avoid purchasing departments or company buyers. Buyers don't use the equipment, they merely shop for it. Find out who the order originates with and put them on your mailing list.

Because catalogs represent such an important component of the safety equipment selling effort, SEDA offers a cooperative catalog plan that permits distributors to obtain a customized catalog containing their product lines with manufacturers of the equipment assuming the bulk of the costs.

SEDA says the catalog program is consistently rated by members as the single most valuable benefit they receive from the Association.

Fire equipment: a hot business

According to the National Fire Protection Assn., there were more than 2 million reported fires in 1983 (the last year for which data is complete) which accounted for $6.5 billion in loss or damage.

Because in many respects, the distribution of fire protection equipment is a science unto itself, in 1963 the National Assn. of Fire Equipment Distributors (NAFED) was founded.

In the 22 years of its existence, NAFED has become one of the leading forces in the promulgation of standards relating to firefighting devices.

The latest categories of equipment to require special attention are computer installations, robotics and sophisticated medical devices such as the million dollar computerized axial tomographic (CAT) scanner used by hospitals to diagnose patients.

As with the rest of the safety equipment field, the marketing of fire protection is as much a matter of the distributor having the right device as it is convincing the customer of his need. In most cases, fire protection is mandated by OSHA, insurance or other governmental regulations.

The "hottest" item in the fire equipment distributor's arsenal is still the fire extinguisher and NAFED estimates that portable extinguishers were successful in putting out fully 94% of all reported cases of industrial fires last year.

While distributors report that water type extinguishers are still available, they are being deposed by the more versatile dry chemical, and halon types that provide protection against "A", "B", and "C" fires.

In addition to the standard items such as smoke detectors, alarm systems, pails, hoses, axes and ladders, NAFED points out that first aid kits provide an often overlooked opportunity for the distributor to increase his sales.

Noting that under OSHA regulations an employer is required to keep a fully stocked medicine cabinet, NAFED says that servicing and restocking of kits can be a lucrative source of business for the distributor.

With clear economic skies extending into the near future based upon new products, new industries and a heightened national safety consciousness, distributors may expect to see modest but steady gains in the next few years. And as Richard Rice put it: "By enlightening companies we can create our own market." **—Doug Harper**